Ante and post-natal deaths of female children

71. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ante and post-natal deaths of female children have disturbed the gender ratio in some of the States/UTs;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to effectively check the menace of neglecting and killing female infants?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): As per information furnished by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare: (a) and (b) Sex ratio in India has declined over the century from 972 in 1901 to 927 in 1991. The sex ratio has since gone up to 933 in 2001. In contrast, the child sex ratio for the age group of 0-6 years in 2001 is 927 girls per thousand boys against 945 recorded in 1991 Census. The Census 2001 figures further reveal that the child sex ratio is comparatively lower in the affluent regions. *i.e.,* Punjab (789), Haryana (819), Chandigarh (845), Delhi (868), Gujarat (883) and Himachal Pradesh (896). Some of the reasons commonly put forward to explain the consistently low levels of sex ratio are son preference, neglect of the girl child resulting in higher mortality at younger age, female infanticide, female foeticide, higher maternal mortality and male bias in enumeration of population. The last, but not the least, may be the latest trend of having preference for a small family of one son and one daughter. Easy availability of the sex determination tests and abortion services may also be proving to be catalyst in the process, which may be further stimulated by pre-conception sex selection facilities.

(c) In order the check female foeticide, the Pre-natal Diagnostic Technique (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994, and amendments in 2003 has been brought into operation. The Act prohibits determination and disclosure of the sex of the foetus. Under the Act, use of Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques and genetic counseling is permissible for detection of genetic abnormalities. The violation of the Act punishable with imprisonment upto 5 years and fine upto Rs. 1.00 lakh apart from cancellation of registration and license. The steps taken by the Government include creation of awareness against the practice of pre-natal determination

of sex through radio, television and print media units, launching of "Save the Girl Child" Compaign with a view to lessen son preference by highlighting achievement of young girls, constitution of a National Monitoring and Inspection Committee which has representative from National Commission for Women and Ministry of Woman and Child Development to take stock of the ground realities by field visits to the problem states, setting up of a national Surveillance Cell for efective implementation of the Act and sensitization of the Medical Community, Police and Training of Judiciary for better implementation of the Act. In addition, other activities undertaken are sensitization of the organizations working against sex selection, involvement of the medical professionals, religious/spiritual leaders to spread the message, telecasting TV spots on private satellite channels and Doordarshan, and involvement of elected representatives in creating awareness etc.

Grant for nutrition of children

†72. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government provide grants to the states for nutrition of children;

(b) if so, with what conditions the above grant is allocated; and

(c) the States whose grant has lapsed alongwith the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) From the year 2005-06, the Government of India provides grant-in-aid to the States/UTs for supplementary nutrition under ICDS, to the extent of 50% of financial norms or 50% of the actual expenditure incurred by the State, whichever is less.

(c) The question does not arise, as any shortfall or excess expenditure made by the State is taken into account while releasing the further grant.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.